DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 308 097 SO 019 918

AUTHOR Greenbaum, Stuart, Ed.
TITLE School Bullying and Victimization. NSSC Resource Paper.
INSTITUTION National School Safety Center, Malibu, CA.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
PUB DATE Sep 88
GRANT 85-MU-CX-0003
NOTE 29p.; For related documents, see SO 019 914-915.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Policy; *Aggression; Elementary Secondary Education; School Policy; Student Attitudes; *Student Behavior; Students; Student Subcultures; Suicide; *Victims of Crime; *Violence
IDENTIFIERS School Yards; *Victimization

ABSTRACT

Schoolyard bullying, a pervasive and significant problem, tends to lead to anti-social behavior in the adult/parental years as well, perpetuating the pattern of violence in a new generation of students. Bullies, and often their victims, tend to operate at a unilateral, or one-way, attitudinal level instead of a reciprocal or collaborative level. Bullying seems to be developed in individuals through a process of socialization, often starting in the home. Similarly, those who are victimized may be the products of overprotective parents or the victims of abuse at home. In the worst instances, bullying may lead to murder or suicide. Basic to any program of intervention or anti-bullying is a clear repudiation of repeated physical and mental maltreatment and the discarding of the notion that bullying is a manifestation of normal youthful aggressive behavior. The most effective strategy when confronting bullies is to make a stand and leave the field with dignity, but without violence. A list of 26 resources, a report to parents from the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and eight photocopies of newspaper articles are included. (PPB)

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SCHOOL BULLYING AND VICTIMIZATION

NSSC RESOURCE PAPER

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SO019918

National School Safety Center
Pepperdine University
Malibu, CA 90265
818/377-6200

Third Printing - September 1988

The National School Safety Center is a partnership of the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Education and Pepperdine University.

Prepared under Grant #85-MU-CX-0003 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

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Ronald D. Stephens, Executive Director
Stuart Greenbaum, Communications Director
Ronald W. Garrison, Field Services Director

Stuart Greenbaum, Project Editor

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SCHOOL BULLYING AND VICTIMIZATION

Few memories of childhood may be as powerful as that of the class bully and his hapless victims. The bully, big, strong, seemingly intrepid, was always on the lookout for opportunities to pick on vulnerable children, usually smaller than himself.

Whatever happened to that bully? Did he ever outgrow his overly aggressive, anti-social behavior and become a mature, well adjusted adult? Most psychologists who study these children say probably not. A bully as young as 8 who is not taught how to behave and cope with frustration is very likely headed for a lifetime of failure, exacting a great toll from society. Research shows that a disproportionately high number of these children underachieve in school or drop out, perform below potential throughout their careers, land in prison for committing adult crimes and become abusive husbands and fathers. Worst of all, they frequently raise a new generation of bullies, perpetuating the cycle of violence.

Schoolyard bullying is a significant and pervasive problem. Based on extensive research conducted by Dr. Dan Olweus, professor of psychology at Bergen University in Norway and recently a fellow at the Center for the Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University, 15 percent of school children are involved in bully-victim problems. One in 10 students is regularly harassed or attacked by bullies. These figures are based on surveys of more than 150,000 elementary and junior high school students in Norway and Sweden, and, according to Dr. Olweus, are most likely representative of the United States as well. Dr. Olweus is a leading international expert on bully-victim problems and has conducted research in this area for more than 20 years.

Dr. David Perry, a professor of psychology at Florida Atlantic University, is currently involved in a research program that would replicate Dr. Olweus' study in the United States. His findings will most likely reflect the results of the Scandinavian studies.

In a separate, 22-year study, psychologist Dr. Leonard Eron of the University of Illinois-Chicago, Rowell Huesmann and other colleagues found that young bullies have about a one-in-four chance of having a criminal record by age 30. Other children have about a 1 in 20 chance of becoming adult criminals.

The researchers studied 870 children from Columbia County, New York, from age 8 to age 30. Of the 427 children who were found at age 19, those who had been most aggressive as children were more likely to have dropped out of school and had trouble with the law. And of the 409 who were found at age 30, those who had been childhood bullies tended to have children who were bullies. These men were also found to be abusive with their wives, punish their children severely and have more convictions for violent crimes.

Because this pattern of aggression, misdirected frustration and intimidation is so easily ingrained, researchers say, early intervention by caring, attentive adults is crucial. "It's harder and harder for kids to change once the pattern is set and time goes on," according to Dr. Eron.

Psychologist Dr. Robert Selman, associate professor at Harvard's graduate school of education and school of medicine, agrees. "I don't think there are natural bullies," he says. "But if one has been bullied by adults it becomes a style one picks up."

WHAT IS A BULLY?

While active and assertive play is a normal sign of childhood, especially in boys, bullies are distinct in their quickness to start a fight, belligerence and use of force and intimidation to get their way. They are overly aggressive, destructive, and enjoy dominating other children. According to the book Social Development in Young Children (1977):

> Attributing children's aggressive behavior to the fact that they are 'aggressive' is a particularly destructive form of circular reasoning. Children learn to perform aggressive behaviors such as kicking, hitting, and biting, and they learn to identify situations where these behaviors will have rewarding results.

Aside from the characteristics described above, bullies may also shout insults, make threats and call names.

"Bullies see the world with a paranoid's eye," observes Dr. Kenneth Dodge, a psychologist at Vanderbilt University. "They see threats where none exist, and they take these imagined threats as provocations to strike back." Dr. Dodge's research shows that by the age of 7 or 8, bullies already are in the habit of misinterpreting an innocent brush or bump as a blatant attack. As a result, the psychologist adds, "They feel justified in retaliating for what are actually imaginary harms."

Other research reveals that bullies don't realize how aggressive they are. Dr. John Lochman, a psychologist at Duke University Medical School, has found that bullies habitually perceive other children as being more aggressive than themselves. "Bullies see their anger as justified," Dr. Lochman says. "They see the other kid as having started the trouble."

According to Dr. Selman, bullies' anger and aggressive behavior are caused by immature thinking patterns. The psychologist suggests human thinking may be categorized into three levels, progressing from a primitive, commanding attitude to a heightened ability to collaborate and cooperate with others. The levels are:

1) Unilateral -- one-way commands and assertions of one's own needs, and/or conversely, simple and unchallenged accomodations to another's demands;

2) Self-reflective/reciprocal -- a focus on verbal persuasion, convincing others, making deals or other methods that protect ones own interests in any negotiating process;

3) Collaborative -- a more sophisticated level when one understands that a relationship's continuity is more important than the particular issue at hand. Strategies include dialogue, process analysis and developing a shared goal of mutual understanding.

"Bullies certainly fall into the unilateral thinking level, or worse," Dr. Selman observes. The psychologist and his colleagues are working on a program geared for children at these varying levels of thinking. Dr. Selman contends that if teachers and others who work with children could recognize the nuances in each level, they could more effectively help raise the child to the next stage of thinking.

Boy bullies are three to four times more likely to inflict physical assaults than girls. But girls tend to be more subtle and psychologically manipulative, shunning their victims or otherwise ostracizing them. Some researchers suggest that while girls aren't as likely to suffer the life-long problems that await boy bullies, they are likely to become mothers of bullies. "The more aggressive little girls grow into mothers who punish their children harshly," Dr. Eron says.

IS A BULLY BORN A BULLY?

As with alcoholism and other forms of abusive behavior, evidence strongly suggests that bullying tends to be an intergenerational problem. Many childhood bullies, in fact, are often abused by one parent at home and witness that parent abuse his spouse and the child's siblings. "A bully at school is a victim at home," says Dr. Nathanial Floyd, a long-time researcher and writer on bullying and a psychologist for the Board of Cooperative Educational Services of Southern Westchester, New York. Living with parents who may abuse them teaches children that aggression and violence are effective and appropriate means to attain a goal.

Young children also learn to dominate others through watching violent television programs. Studies indicate that after watching aggression on television, children view that behavior as a successful form of social interaction and act more aggressively with peers.

In Social Development in Young Children, the authors note:

> There is no evidence supporting the commonly held view that watching aggression enables children to release 'pent-up hostility' that otherwise might result in aggressive behavior. On the contrary, viewing aggressive incidents increases children's knowledge of how to perform aggressive acts and reduces their inhibitions against behaving

aggressively themselves (Bandura, 1973, et al.).

Researchers have also found that parents of bullies tend to ignore their children and not really know what is happening to them. "It's not just a lack of nurturance," Dr. Eron says. "These parents don't notice what's going on or know much about them." The parents also tend toward extremes in their discipline: On one hand, they may punish their children harshly for certain infractions, while other times the children may commit mayhem without a word of reprimand.

Inconsistent punishments teach children that they may be treated severely at any time. This kind of arbitrary treatment, coupled with the children's feeling that their parents aren't really involved or interested in their lives, reinforce the feeling of worthlessness already rooted in them.

According to Dr. Ronald Slaby, a Harvard psychologist who has studied bullies, parents often exacerbate the school bullying problem by ill-advisedly teaching their children to strike back at the least provocation.

"There are strategies of negotiating, ignoring, talking back in a non-provocative manner, seeking support from parents, peers and teachers, and facing down the provoker without retaliating through aggression," he says.

"Perhaps our schools and our culture have been remiss in teaching how to be assertive without being aggressive, and by assertive I mean standing up for one's right, holding one's ground, without being hostile," adds Dr. Slaby.

According to Dr. Floyd, many bullies cannot help their aggressive behavior. "They seem to need a victim and may work hard to create a victim, even if there isn't one," he says. "When these bullies see kids they perceive as vulnerable, they are threatened because it reminds them of the shame and humiliation of their own victimization. In the bully's constant teasing and aggression, it is as if he is desperately trying to get the victim to say no, so that the bully himself will feel less threatened."

Bullying is considered a major problem in Japan and in Scandinavian countries, where violence, vandalism and general delinquency are increasing. This violence is one reason why Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone has called for major educational reform in his country. Some theorize that the pressure to conform in both Japan and Scandanavian countries is so profound that children who are even slightly different than their peers are easy targets for bullies.
"Bullies are receiving a lot of attention in Japan because they're not consistent with (the behavioral norm of) Japanese culture, which teaches treating each other with courtesy and kindness," observes Dr. Gerald Lesser, a Harvard professor of education who spent four months in Japan last year.

Dr. Olweus and Dr. Eron agree that bullies are usually children who have "too little love and care and too much 'freedom'" at home. Through his research, Dr. Olweus is trying to dispel what he believes are several common myths about bullies. For example, he says, there is no research that suggests bullying behavior stems from poor grades. Nor does he believe that bullies are secretly anxious and insecure. Dr. Selman would disagree, indicating the anxiety and insecurity are repressed and difficult to identify.

VICTIMS

Contrary to popular belief, bullying victims are not always that different from other kids. Wearing glasses, fatness, red hair or other relatively unusual conditions do not invite bully victimization. Generally speaking, however, victims are physically weaker than other boys, while bullies are stronger and bigger than average.

Few adults would tolerate bullying by their peers. After all, adults would expect support from several sources, including the law or an employee's union. Most adults also would have the psychological stamina to face up to unreasonable, overly aggressive behavior.

Children, on the other hand, have no such recourse, and as a result, suffer in more ways than the obvious scrapes and bruises might suggest. A child who is prey for the school bully may be stigmatized by other children who fear and avoid him, further eroding an already battered confidence. As a result, he may assume an attitude of self-reproach.

Dr. Floyd believes children react this way because they need to find reasons for events and justice in the world around them. This easily leads to a feeling by victims that they must have deserved the taunting, teasing or other harassment. Victims may withdraw and be less willing to take social or intellectual risks at just the time when they most need encouragement from friends and satisfaction from completing new ventures.

Dr. Floyd adds that victims often are overprotected by parents who encourage dependent behavior. Others may be, like their attackers, victims of abuse at home.

Merciless and unrelenting bullying has caused several victims to take their own lives. Conversely, some victims have killed their tormentors.
Nathan Faris, a 7th-grade student at DeKalb High School in DeKalb, Missouri, decided that four years of taunting by other children as "chubby" and "walking dictionary" was more than enough. On March 2, 1987, Faris brought a gun to school and fatally shot another student before killing himself in class. Classmates said that nobody really had anything against Nathan -- "He was just someone to pick on."

In Japan, parents have filed a 22 million yen damage suit against the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and parents of two alleged bullies, claiming their 13-year-old son's suicide was caused by Ijime (bullying). The parents also claim the school principal and several teachers not only failed to intervene to stop the harassment, but assisted the bullies in their activities. The boy hanged himself in a railway restroom and left a note naming two classmates responsible for his anguish. The boy had been forced to serve as messenger for the other two and was repeatedly buried by them in mock funerals.

According to the [London] Times Educational Supplement, Ijime caused at least nine student suicides in 1985, as well as several other cases in which victims murdered their tormentors. In Tokyo, a special "bullybuster" force of 30 officers arrested more than 900 youngsters for bullying during the first half of 1985.

Domestically, schools face a significant liability exposure for bullying. A 10-year-old San Francisco boy is suing five bullies and the San Francisco School District for $351,000 for failing to enforce the child's right to attend a safe, secure and peaceful school. The victim alleges that the bullies punched and intimidated him every day during the elementary school's fall 1985 term.

Bullying affects school attendance and the overall campus climate and safety. Victims understandably fear the school itself and the abuse they know awaits them. A 1984 study by the National Association of Secondary School Principals found that even in the best-administered schools, 25 percent of students surveyed reported one of their most serious concerns was fear of bullies.

"Victimization is a major problem," says Dr. Floyd, "because it can be such a major distraction from the whole educational process. And we're hearing from the local districts that the problem is growing."

In Violent Schools -- Safe Schools (NIE, 1978), a survey of students' reports of neighborhood and school crime clearly linked fear of assault with avoiding school. Eighteen percent of students who had been attacked in their neighborhoods also were afraid most of the time while on campus, compared with only 2 percent of the other students. Overall, 56 percent of assault victims reported being afraid at school at least sometimes. Fifteen percent of the attack victims reported staying home sometimes for fear of being bothered or hurt at school. When they do come to school, these children avoid certain places, especially restrooms.

Victims are also far more likely to bring a weapon to school to protect themselves than other students. Twenty-nine percent of victims said they occasionally brought weapons to school; only 9 percent of other students did so.

The report also discovered a strong correlation between

victimization and limited social contact: 19 percent of those victimized at school said they either had no friends at school or only one or two, while 12 percent of the other students said so. As a result, victims, who most need support, have fewer places to turn for help.

Even more alarming victimization statistics were reported in the National Adolescent Student Health Survey conducted in Fall 1987. Approximately 11,000 eighth and tenth graders from a nationally representative sample of more than 200 public and private schools in 20 states participated in the study.

* Almost half of the boys (49%) and about one-fourth of the girls (28%) report having been in at least one fight (defined as when tow people hit each other or attack each other with weapons) during the past year.
* More than one-third of the students (34%) report that someone threateded to hurt them, 14% report having been robbed, and 13% report having been attacked while at school or on a school bus during the past year.
* Nearly one in five girls (18%) report that during the past year, while outside of school, someone tried to force them to have sex when they did not want to.

INTERVENTION

In his book Aggression in Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys, Dr. Olweus notes that with few exceptions, traditional treatment methods for bullies (psychoanalysis, group therapy, psychodrama, and some forms of psychotherapy) have been of little value. This finding is not surprising, Dr. Olweus writes, because the requirements for successful treatment are missing: the patient must realize his behavior is problematic and sincerely want to change. However, Dr. Olweus says, "The younger the boy when remedial measures are initiated, the greater the chances for enduring improvement."

In Norway, Dr. Olweus established an experimental intervention program in 42 schools at the request of the government. Preliminary results show bullying incidents have been cut by more than half in the two years since the program began. Dr. Olweus hopes that through the program, parents and teachers will become more aware of the problem and assume greater responsibility for helping control children's activities at home and at school.

Dr. Olweus recommends that adults closely supervise recess and enforce "strict and straightforward" rules of behavior, and that teachers mete out consistent, non-physical punishment to misbehaving children. Equally important, however, is for teachers to generously praise good behavior. If class rules are adhered to, Olweus says, bullying victims will enjoy the support of "neutral" and well adjusted classmates. When a child is bullied, teachers should use their creativity to help him assert himself and make him valuable in the eyes of the class. At the same time, parents are encouraged to teach their children to

develop and maintain new friendships.

Both parents and teachers must encourage better communication with children who may be at risk for bullying. "Victims are afraid to tell their parents for fear of being bullied more," he said.

Basic to any anti-bullying program, according to Dr. Olweus, is "a clear repudiation of repeated physical and mental maltreatment." In Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys, Olweus writes:

> Naturally, this repudiation should be directed primarily against the phenomenon, not the particular bully; but it seems inevitable that it will also affect the bully to some degree. Such an emphasis ought to come from many different sources: from the school authorities -- admonitions that physical and mental abuse will not be tolerated in the school; from the teachers -- clear statements and, in addition, active intervention in situations where mobbing (bullying) occurs or can be suspected to occur; from the classmates -- active intervention, too, with the aim of protecting the whipping boy; from the parents of bullies -- through serious discussion, but not physical punishment. Even though the peer group very likely can play an important role, I believe that the adults, at least at first, must assume the main responsibility for stressing such a repudiation. This requires a certain amount of courage on the part of the adults, especially since all suggestions of even a slightly controlling character have come to seem so unfashionable. However, to fail to stop these activities implies a tacit confirmation -- an attitude that seems very inhumane.

International authorities on schoolyard bullies and victims gathered in May 1987 at Harvard University for a "Schoolyard Bully Practicum," sponsored by the National School Safety Center to develop a five-point prevention program for the United States. The Practicum was the first such meeting of prominent researchers, psychologists, and school, law enforcement and public relations practitioners. Practicum participants included Drs. Olweus, Eron, Floyd, Lesser, Perry, Selman, and Slaby, as well as Peter Blauvelt, director of security, Prince George County Public Schools, Upper Marlboro, Maryland; Robert Maher, assistant principal, Lakeland Senior High School, Shrub Oak, New York; public relations counselor Edward L. Bernays, considered the "father of modern public relations;" and from the NSSC, Ronald Stephens, Ed.D., executive director; Glen Scrimger, field services director; and Stuart Greenbaum, communications director.

NSSC will introduce various components of the experts' program suggestions during the 1987-88 school year. According to Practicum participants, five central ideas must be acknowledged by the public and school administrators in trying to solve the

bullying-victimization phenomenon. They are:

1) School bullying is a significant problem;

2) Fear and suffering are becoming part of the everyday lives of victims of bullying, making them avoid certain areas at school, stay home from school altogether, run away, and in isolated cases, commit suicide;

3) Young bullies are more likely to grow up and and become criminals and to suffer from family and professional problems. Practicum participants strongly believe early prevention or intervention programs can not only stop school bullying, but save victim, the bully and society from years of potentially tragic problems;

4) The prevailing attitude that kids fighting each other is a manifestation of normal youthful aggressive behavior must be discarded. "There appears to be a pervasive ethic of aggressive behavior that seriously detracts from the school curriculum," said Dr. Floyd. And finally,

5) The United States should follow the lead of Scandinavia and Japan, whose governments have addressed bullying problems with national intervention and prevention programs. Their efforts have been successful in reducing bullying incidents and can work in the United States as well, the participants said.

Practicum participants identified a wide range of strategies to help educators and others control or prevent bullying. First, assess the scope of the problem through a questionnaire answered by teachers and students. Communicate clear and consistently enforced behavior standards, closely monitor playground activity and be visible on campus. Also, watch for symptoms of bullying victims such as withdrawal, decline in study habits or grades, anxiety, and cuts, bruises or torn clothing. The key, though, is for everyone -- educators, law enforcers, parents and students -- to better understand schoolyard bully-victim problems and work together to prevent this emotional and physical suffering among youth.

Intervention programs to deal with school bullying are already in place in several school districts. For example, at English High School in Boston, bullies are warned or suspended, and then counseled by doctoral candidates in psychology from Harvard, who monitor their progress. Serious cases are referred to school system psychologists.
In Southern Westchester County, New York, where Dr. Floyd implemented an anti-bullying program, chronic bullies are counseled in groups and individually. They are given incentives to cooperate with peers and are encouraged to gain control over the need to bully, partly by reassessing how they view children they see as vulnerable.

The most effective strategy for victims when confronting bullies,

Dr. Floyd says, is to "make a stand and leave the field with dignity," not necessarily to fight. In his program, victims are taught assertiveness through group discussions, role-playing and counseling.

Dr. Floyd has prepared checklists for teachers to help them identify potential victims and bullies and steer them toward help. The psychologist believes current trends in today's society to sue, criticize and blame are in part responsible for the bullying phenomenon. "Kids are influenced by the culture, which endorses belittling and teasing, especially at athletic competitions. In truth, we have become a blaming society."

# # #

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Report to Parents

What to Do About Bullying

Few memories of childhood may be as vivid as that of the class bully lurking, teasing, shoving--never missing a chance to harass a victim. The bully--big, strong, seemingly intrepid--was always on the lookout for opportunities to pick on vulnerable children, usually smaller or younger.

Whatever happened to that bully? Did this belligerent child ever outgrow his aggressive antisocial behavior and become a mature, well-adjusted adult? Probably not. Research shows that a high number of these children do poorly in school or drop out, perform below their potential throughout their careers, land in prison for committing adult crimes, and become abusive adults when they marry.

Not kids' stuff anymore. Bullying, too often perceived as simply a "kids will be kids" problem, is dead serious. It's just as troublesome and prevalent now as it was in your childhood. Studies show that one in 10 students is regularly harassed or attacked by bullies; 15 percent of all schoolchildren are involved in bully/victim problems. Equally strong in the inner cities and rural communities, bullies have become the topic of considerable research among American educators, researchers, and law enforcement officers.

How do victims become the targets? Contrary to popular belief, bullying victims don't always differ much from other kids. Children who wear glasses, are chubby, have red hair, speak with a foreign accent, or wear unstylish clothes do not automatically invite bully attacks. Generally, however, victims are physically weaker, often younger. They may be lonely children with few friends. Somehow victims become accessible to attack by the route they walk to and from school, by the bus stop they frequent, by the street they live on, because of an older or younger sibling, and so on. Bullies are stronger, bigger than average, and more often boys than girls.

What can be done about bullying? First, recognize that this is a <u>real</u> problem for children, which can cause great distress and suffering all the way into adulthood. It's not merely curious childish behavior. Researchers discovered that very often children's fears about being bullied are not taken seriously. So if your child complains--believe it.

Next, whether incidents take place at school, en route, or elsewhere, <u>immediately inform your child's school</u> of your concerns. Alerted teachers can carefully monitor your child's (and the suspected bully's) actions. They may opt to make "behavior" the subject of a class discussion. If problems continue the teacher and principal may call for a meeting with the parents of the bully and the victim. In any case, the school's message will be clear: bullying is <u>not</u> acceptable. Knowing help and reinforcement are available at school and at home is critical to a victim and may cause bullies to alter their ways.

Watch for symptoms. Victims may be withdrawn; experience a drop in grades; be hesitant to go to school; come home with torn clothes and unexplained bruises. Be suspicious if a child needs extra supplies or often needs extra lunch money--a bully may be extorting money or supplies. Find out why a child takes toys or other possessions to school and regularly "loses" them.

Talk, but listen too. Openly communicate--without prying. Encourage children to share information about school, social events, the walk or ride to and from school. Listen to their conversations with other children also. This could be your first clue to whether the child is a victim--<u>or</u> a bully. Keep track of incidences of bullying. This way you can show school officials that a pattern may be developing.

Don't bully your child yourself. Take a look at your family's discipline measures. Try to teach children to obey rules by nonphysical, consistently enforced means.

Teach your child to be independent. Don't just tell your child to "fight back," or "just ignore them and they'll go away." Teach children to stand up for themselves verbally. Inquire about programs that will boost self-esteem. Encourage them to recruit friends. A confident, resourceful child, who has friends, is less likely to be bullied.

The National School Safety Center has published a variety of materials to help educators and parents prevent bullying. For ordering information, write National School Safety Center, 16830 Ventura Blvd., Suite 200, Encino, CA 91436.

National Association of Elementary School Principals
1615 Duke Street • Alexandria, VA 22314-3483 • (703) 684-3345

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Science Times

The Bully: New Research Depicts a Paranoid, Lifelong Loser

Psychologists strive to change a bully's ways before it's too late.

By DANIEL GOLEMAN

IT is as if the young bully's life were destined to leave his victims laughing last.

The bully, conspicuous in his tormenting g g of others, victimizes himself through a lifelong pattern of self-defeating aggression and the failures that grow out of it, new studies reveal.

Rapidly accumulating research on the psychology of bullies also shows that the belligerence of these youngsters arises not just from nastiness, but also from a perceptual bias that leads them to see — and retaliate against — threats where none exist.

"Bullies see the world with a paranoid's eye," said Kenneth Dodge, a psychologist at Vanderbilt University. "They feel justified in retaliating for what are actually imaginary harms."

With the growing understanding of what makes a bully, and the realization that bullying may blight a child's entire life, psychologists are trying new tactics to help youthful tyrants change their ways before it is too late.

Of course, rough-and-tumble aggression is typical of normal children, particularly boys. The bully is set apart by his quickness to start fights, to use force to get his way and his general belligerence. Only a small fraction of boys, those who are extremely aggressive, are thought to fall into this category.

Because girls by and large are less physically aggressive than boys, they do not seem to be at risk for the long-term problems that befall bullies. But some of the most aggressive girls, as adults, become the mothers of bullies. Researchers do not yet know whether that is a result of inherited factors or of such things as the severity with which they punish their children.

The recent work adds a new twist to older theories about the roots of human aggression. While Freud saw aggression as a basic human drive that had to be channeled by the controls of the ego and superego, many psychologists now feel aggression stems from faulty thinking and a penchant for retaliation that verges on the paranoid.

Some current findings are consistent with such older views as the idea, inspired by the work of Alfred Adler, that the bully is compensating for deep feelings of inferiority.

"We find that bullies have a strong need to control others," said John Lochman, a psychologist at Duke University Medical School. "Their need to be dominant masks an underlying fear that they are not in control, and they mask the sense of inadequacy by being a bully."

Treatment does not challenge those underlying feelings but rather tries to use them constructively.

"We tell the boys that if another kid gets them so mad they blow up, then the kid is controlling them," said Dr. Lochman. "We tell them they can win by not getting mad."

Even though this approach may not deal with the child's deeper troubles, it seems to work, at least in improving relationships at school, according to Dr. Lochman. Some psychologists believe that such problems as the bully's troubles with others can often be remedied with minor intervention, while by adulthood those same patterns require intensive therapy.

The new intervention programs focus on younger children, from 4 years of age to 10. "It's harder and harder for kids to change once the pattern is set and time goes on," said Leonard Eron, a psychologist at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. Eron published an article on the lifelong patterns of bullies in the January issue of The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.

The bully's aggression is his undoing, Dr.

Continued on Page 23

A Mean Life: The Boy, The Teen-Ager, The Man

Researchers studying boys who are bullies found a common lifetime pattern of destructive behavior. Studies of girls revealed no comparable pattern.

AT AGE 8

Schoolyard aggression Other children see him as starting fights over nothing, taking things without asking, quick to anger

Friendship Often a social outcast

Difficulties at home His parents see him as hard to control, punish him with severity, and take little interest in his life.

Intelligence Tests indicate intelligence falls within a wide range.

Academic performance Scores below his potential on tests of subject mastery. Teachers do not like him.

School life Dislikes school and expresses his defiance with tardiness and truancy.

AT AGE 19

School Likely to have dropped out.

Criminality Three times more likely than others to have been in trouble with the law.

Friends Seen as a troublemaker by his peers.

Intellectual skills Performs below innate potential on achievement tests.

AT AGE 30

Marriage Wife sees him as aggressive, even abusive. She, too, is quick to anger.

Work Often in a job that requires skills below his abilities.

Legal troubles Run-ins with the law, from drunken driving to crimes of violence.

Fatherhood Like his own parents, uncaring and punitive. His children tend to repeat the pattern; his son is a bully.

The Bully: Story of a Lifelong Loser

[Continued From Page 19

Eron has found. It not only makes him a social outcast, but also interferes with learning; teachers tend to loathe such troublemakers.

In a 22-year-study, done with Rowell Huesmann and other colleagues, Dr. Eron tracked 870 children from Columbia County, N.Y., from the time they were 8 until they were 30.

The study found that though bullies do not seem to have lower intelligence than other children, as adults they score less well on tests of intellectual achievement, evidently reflecting the difficulties they had in school. They also have more run-ins with the law and less desirable jobs than do their more peaceable peers.

Problems as Adults

Of the 427 children who could be tracked down at the age of 19, those who had been most aggressive as children were more likely to have dropped out of school and to have a criminal record. And of the 400 who were found at the age of 30, data from 82 who had children between the ages of 8 and 10 showed that parents who were bullies tend to have children who are bullies.

In addition, the study found that, compared with those who were not troublemakers in childhood, the grownup bullies are far more likely to abuse their spouses, punish their children more severely and have more convictions for crimes of violence.

To be sure, not every aggressive child will end up doing poorly; there are several kinds of bullies. "Some children are bad at school but not at home, and some children are aggressive but not social outcasts," said Karen Bierman, a psychologist at Pennsylvania State University. "Those who are aggressive across the board, and who have no friends, are at the most risk in life."

The bully's traits can be traced over three generations, Dr. Eron's research shows. The bullies had parents who disciplined them severely, and those who had been bullies as children tended to have children who themselves were troublemakers at elementary school age.

Ignored by Parents

Although boys are, in general, more aggressive than girls, the meaner girls also tended to raise mean children.

"One way women manifest their aggression is by punishing their children," Dr. Eron said. "The more aggressive little girls grew into mothers who punished their children harshly."

Although the bullies were punished more severely, their parents did not seem to take much interest in them, the study found. "These are kids who are often ignored by their parents," said Dr. Eron. "It's not just a lack of nurturance; these parents don't notice what's going on or know much about them."

Such lack of interest typically creates in a child a diminished sense of worth, but with the aggressive children the problem seems to be compounded by the intensity of punishment, which adds its effects to the child's sense of worthlessness. Moreover, the parent presents the child with the vivid model of aggressiveness, a model the child seems to use in dealing with other children.

To make things worse, there is a quality of capriciousness about the punishment meted out by the parents of bullies, so that the bully's world seems to be particularly threatening and unpredictable.

Dr. Gerald Patterson, a psychologist at the Oregon Social Learning Center in Eugene, found that the parents of aggressive schoolchildren typically punish according to their mood rather than according to what the child has actually done. When the parent is angry, the child is punished; if the parent is in a good mood, the child can commit mayhem with impunity.

This home life could be a major factor in another hallmark of the bully, a sense that threats are all about and might strike at any time. Research by Dr. Dodge shows bullies tend to interpret a neutral encounter — an innocent bump, say — as an intentional attack.

"Bullies see threats where none exist," said Dr. Dodge. "And they take these imagined threats as provocations to strike back."

The bullies tend to attribute hostile intentions to other children who actually mean them no harm, Dr. Dodge found. This habitual misinterpretation seems to emerge as a fixture of personality by around the age of 7 or 8, according to his report, published in the current issue of Child Development. Dr. Dodge is now beginning a study of 500 4-year-old children to see how and when these thinking patterns develop.

In addition to finding threats everywhere, bullies do not seem to realize just how aggressive they are, according to research by Dr. Lochman to be published in The Journal of Clinical and Consulting Psychology. In the study, bullies were paired with a less aggressive boy and shown videotapes of boys in conflict. In one, for instance, one boy knocks into another, causing him to drop his books; when other children laugh, the boy becomes enraged and hits the other.

The pairs of boys discussed the tapes and what each boy in the videotape felt; they had to defend their positions in a way designed to assess how aggressive they felt during the discussions. The most telling discrepancy, Dr. Lochman feels, is that the bullies saw the other child they discussed the film with as more aggressive during their disagreements, while they did not see themselves as combative at all.

> As adults, they are more likely than peers to get into trouble with the law.

"Bullies see their anger as justified," Dr. Lochman said. "They see the other kid as having started the trouble. Lochman said.

Such perceptual distortions seem to lie behind the bully's belligerence and set him apart from his classmates beginning in the early grades.

While most 4-year-olds are rambunctious, they generally become more self-controlled as they go through kindergarten and first grade. The bullies, however, get worse. By second grade, while other children have learned negotiation and compromise, the bully comes to rely more and more on bluster and force.

Modifying Bully's Behavior

Experts now favor attempts to change the ways of bullies as soon as the problem can be identified, or to head it off altogether, if possible. The new intervention programs typically do not focus on the marks on personality left by family life, an approach followed by child and family therapists. Instead, they use the school to take a more immediate focus on teaching bullies — or those who are likely to become bullies — more peaceable ways of getting their way with other children.

At Duke University, Dr. Lochman's program involves small groups of four or five children who have been identified by their teachers as troublemakers. "We tell the boys that this is a group that will teach them how to better handle situations that get them frustrated and angry," Dr. Lochman said.

"These kids are thin-skinned," Dr. Lochman said. "When you ask them what makes them mad, it's usually things like being teased, put down or taken advantage of by other kids. We give them new ways to respond: instead of getting angry, for instance, they can try out coming back at a kid in a playful way."

Most of the children are unhappy about losing their temper so easily. The groups also teach the children to control their anger before responding, by counting to 10, for example, or walking away from the situation.

Another technique used is role-playing, which gives the children a chance to practice such things as starting a conversation with another child, or getting on a school bus when other children are taunting them.

"One large problem for these children is that they can't think of a friendly response that preserves their own dignity and self-image," said Dr. Dodge. "Being teased or insulted is an afront that they can only respond to by hitting, crying or running away. They need to learn other approaches, to say they don't like kids doing that, or ask them to stop it."

In Dr. Bierman's program at Pennsylvania State University, bullies become part of "friendship groups" with other children. The groups focus on playing together cooperatively, teaching the children such skills as resolving conflicts without resorting to fights.

"We teach them that when you disagree, you should make clear what's bothering you, then try to make a deal with the other kid that will leave both of you happy," Dr. Bierman said. "If they disagree about going first, they can make a deal: this week I go first, next week you do. The bullies have learned that if they hit hard enough, they always go first — but it leaves them with no friends."

Bullies a high risk for crime—study

CHICAGO (AP) — The class bully who terrorized his peers on the playground has about a one-in-four chance of having a criminal record by the age of 30, researchers say.

These findings demonstrate that physically aggressive boys are likely to have a criminal conviction or a record of drivers' violations as adults, said Leonard Eron, a psychology professor at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

The risk of other children having criminal records as adults is about one in 20, said Eron.

The study, which began with 875 third-graders in Columbia County, N.Y., in 1960, also has found that women who were aggressors as children were more likely to severely punish their children.

"Kids learn a certain way of behaving and solving problems," Eron said in a telephone interview. "It sticks with them. They don't lose that kind of (aggressive) behavior."

Eron said the one-in-four chance of becoming an adult law-breaker was determined by analyzing factors such as how punitive the parents were, whether they rejected their children and the amount of violence the children saw on TV.

Researchers traced the children through adulthood — interviewing more than half of them at age 19 and 30 — and also talked to their spouses and children.

He and his associate, Rowell Huesmann, found that patterns for aggressive behavior are set before the age of 8.

He said there are three ideal conditions for learning aggression: seeing examples of it, including television; being rewarded for acting in that fashion and being an object of aggressions. Aggressive children often have parents who punish them harshly, Eron added.

The study found that physically aggressive boys — those who pushed and shoved their peers and took others' belongings — had a much higher than normal rate of breaking the law as adults.

"A kid who grows up in an environment where he's rewarded for aggression and has a lot of opportunity to observe (it), and is frustrated a lot ... grows up to have a record," Eron said.

These boys also tended to be abusive to their wives and were demons on the road.

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Bullies plague schools

Group says they are a real problem

By STEVE BORNFELD
and LINDA LANTOR
Gannett News Service

Almost every adult remembers one schoolyard menace: the kid with the aggressive attitude and the ready fists. The bully.

Bullies still can be found in almost every schoolyard.

"Bullies are a problem plaguing most of the schools I've been in," said Dr. Nathaniel Floyd, a clinical psychologist for the Board of Cooperative Educational Services of Southern Westchester (County), N. Y.

"Breaking the rules is partly a function of being more impulsive and a diminishing of restraints. Kids in school are showing the same thing."

Floyd's concerns are shared by the National School Safety Center at Pepperdine University in Encino, Calif., which devoted its fall journal to the subject. The NSSC, which runs a federally funded program designed to curb school crime, referred to bullying as "maybe the most underrated problem in our schools."

3 percent victims

On a national scale, the problem is sizable, according to Dr. Dan Olweus, a professor at the University of Bergen in Norway, who specializes in victimization research. In the journal, Olweus wrote that American schools harbor approximately 2.1 million bullies and 2.7 million of their victims. Olweus found that 3 percent of students in first through ninth grades were bullied about once a week or more often.

"I see lots of bullying, lots of making fun of each other," says Toni Johansen, an elementary school counselor in the Des Moines School District and president of the Iowa School Counselors' Association.

And while most of the confrontations between them are dismissed by school authorities as the unpleasant inevitabilities of growing up, Floyd said, some incidents assume drastic dimensions. In San Francisco, daily harrassment by bullies prompted a fifth-grader to join his mother in a $351,000 lawsuit against school officials for allegedly failing to protect him.

"Bullies are everywhere, and they don't stop just because graduation comes. Later in life, they bully people in business and in interpersonal relationships. Bullying becomes a way of life," he says.

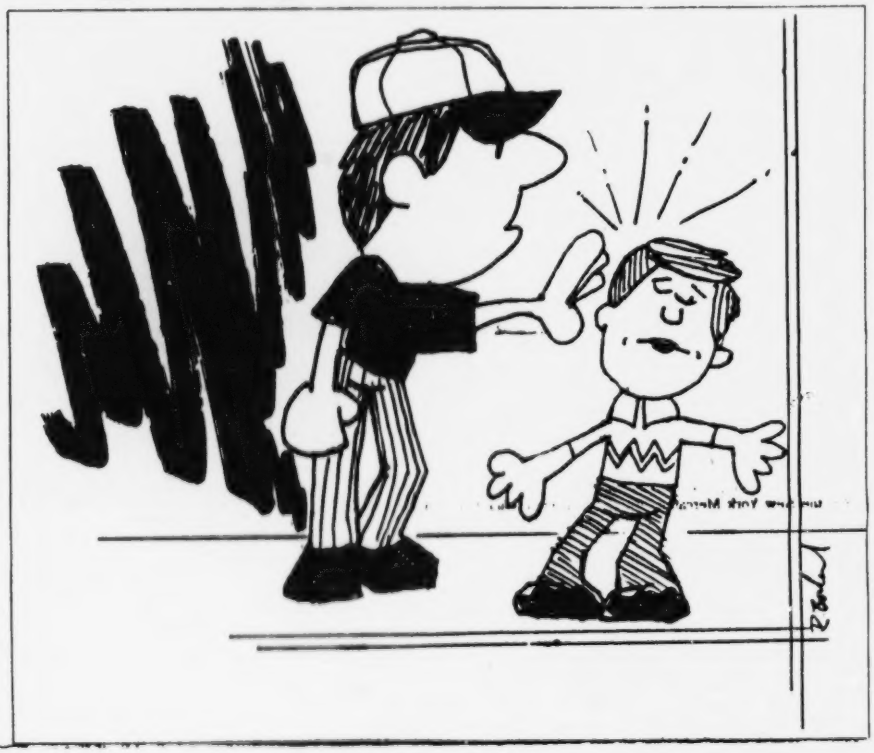
Not addressed

Though Floyd claimed that a potentially lifelong problem can be stopped in the nation's schools, the issue isn't being publicly addressed in some academic quarters. Tari Marshall, a spokeswoman for the National Parent-Teacher Association in Chicago, declined to comment on the NSSC report or the subject of bullying.

Other victims are goaded into more tragic reactions. In Missouri, a seventh-grader ended several years of his schoolmates' hazing by pulling a gun from his duffel bag, shooting one of his tormentors, then killing himself.

No one expressed surprise that the tradition of the school-yard bully lives on.

"In this culture we tolerate bullying behavior to a surprising degree," says Gerald Patterson, a researcher at the Oregon Social Learning Institute in Eugene. "In television and novels, the person who is adept at using physical force is the hero."



We will remember bullies 50 years from now

By STEVE BORNFELD
Gannett News Service

To understand bullies, we have to know why they do what they do — and why we accept it.

A few pointers from experts:

■ ***Attitude adjustment:*** The problem hasn't been properly addressed nationwide, says Ron Garrison, the National School Safety Center's deputy director of education and law enforcement.

Adopting a "boys will be boys" attitude, Garrison says, allows administrators to avoid intervention in student assaults and extortions.

"The experience is so strong that people who attended school 50 years ago are able to tell you exactly what the bully's name was," says Garrison. He cited a recent study, conducted by Dr. Leonard Eron, a University of Chicago psychologist, claiming that one out of every four school bullies will amass a criminal record by age 30. Non-bullies stand a one in 20 chance, Eron concluded.

"The bully adopts the attitude that it's OK to extort and assault, and the victim has the similar feeling that it's OK to be a victim," says Garrison. "It's a problem from kindergarten through the entire school system."

■ ***Behavioral beginnings:*** Bullies' belligerent behavior, clinical psychologist Dr. Nathaniel Floyd says, stems from societal and family factors. Prime instigators, he believes, are violent films and television shows, which are increasingly influential in youngsters' lives, replacing parental attention.

"Parents are busier, so being a parent is not a number one priority now. It's a relaxation of the bonding experience," he says, noting that aggression is also inherited. "The bully is frequently the victim of abuse (at home), so he gets a head start in school."

Though bullies have often been viewed sympathetically as insecure kids hiding behind macho masks, Olweus' interviews revealed that bullies consider themselves less anxious than other students, an assessment shared by their parents.

■ ***Attracting aggravation:*** Bully bait, Floyd says, is usually provided by kids who excel academically, and often relate better to adults than to other children, which Floyd dubbed "a violation of the codes of adolescence." Peers who are needful, vulnerable, weak and passive also attract aggression.

"Those characteristics that might raise in normal people feelings of caring and support, raise feelings of aggression in a bully," says Floyd. "That's why it's a difficult problem to stop."

Teachers often exacerbate the problem by showing favoritism toward students who flatter them, Floyd says. Though their curiosity and thirst for learning appeal to teachers, responding to it targets students for victimization. And once the bullying begins, he says, some teachers are reluctant to reprimand the offenders. "They often feel they can't afford to alienate the aggressive boys because they're worried about their tires, or having their windshield broken," he says.

■ ***Gender differences:*** While male bullying often culminates in physical confrontations, Floyd says, girls practice social bullying. By excluding less popular peers from their group, turning their back on them when they speak or verbally wounding them with a cutting remark, girls wreak emotional damage that can be just as devastating as a fist in the face, he says.

But oral abuse is particularly revealing when dished out by boys, Floyd says, noting that it often exposes the aggressors' insecurities. "You get remarks like, 'Your mother wears combat boots,'-" Floyd says. "If you read the expressions they use correctly, what they're most afraid of is being too closely tied to mothers. It distracts attention from the major concern boys have, which is fear of homosexuality, femininity, not being manly enough."

Whether the abuse is physical or verbal, its effects can range from trivial to tragic, Floyd says, adding that stronger steps should be taken to banish bullying from American schools.

"Many schools are anti-intellectual," Floyd says. "They tell parents that if their kid got beat up, the kid will have to learn to take care of himself, that life is tough and they have to learn to stop being a sissy. That's an anti-intellectual answer. Parents aren't settling for that anymore."

School reeling after taunted boy strikes back

DeKALB, Mo. (AP) — Counselors were called in to help students cope today with the memories of a 12-year-old boy, often taunted as "Chubby," pulling a gun from a bag, fatally wounding a classmate and killing himself.

"It's totally devastating, totally shocking," said DeKalb High School Principal Mark Harpst.

Classes had just begun Monday at the rural school when Nathan D. Faris pulled a pistol from a duffel bag and shot Timothy Perrin, 13, of Rushville, in the head. As students ran from the social studies classroom, Nathan shot himself once in the head, Highway Patrol Trooper Bob Anderson said.

Seventh-graders described Nathan, who lived in Rushville, as the object of relentless teasing. Some classmates called him fat and a "walking dictionary." He earned four A's, two B's and a C on his recent report card, Harpst said.

"Nobody really had anything against him. He was just someone to pick on," said Jessica Lux, 12, who sat one desk away from where the shooting occurred.

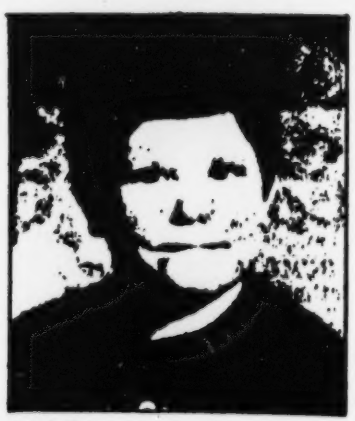
Benji Chapman, 12, said: "It's been happening ever since the third or fourth grade. People teased him because he wore sunglasses — they called him Sunny — and because he's fat."

When Nathan pulled the gun, students began to taunt him, doubting that it was real, she said.

Then, Jessica said, "Tim immediately jumped up and he grabbed Nathan's wrists and he was trying to get Nathan to let go. Apparently Tim thought it was a fake gun because when he let go, he went back to his seat sort of laughing."

Nathan then fired a shot at Tim but missed.

Students gasped as the gunshot echoed in the classroom, and some immediately ran from the room as Nathan fired more shots. Tim was hit by one of the shots and staggered out of the room.



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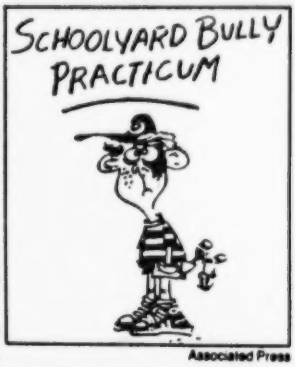
What can we do to stop bullies?

Harvard hosts national experts in study of schoolyard terrorists

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP) — A dozen academicians met Tuesday at Harvard University to draft a national battle plan against schoolyard bullies, who have largely been ignored on their rampages of "peer terrorism."

Parents were the focus of much of the discussion during the first of the two-day "Schoolyard Bully Practicum."

Experts said adults often casually dismiss bullying as part of growing up but must be convinced the violent behavior starts at home and contributes to teenage suicide, high dropout rates and other problems.



Associated Press

"The aggressive kind of behavior we're seeing in our schools is particularly significant, but I don't think most parents have any understanding of the problem," said Ronald D. Stephens, executive director of the National School Safety Center in Encino, Calif.

Stephens said the Pepperdine University center, a national clearinghouse on school safety created at by presidential order in 1977 and funded by the departments of Justice and Education, would distribute the program drafted during the conference to schools nationwide.

Stephens, pointing to research showing schoolyard bullies are far more likely to become adult criminals than their classmates, said it is the responsibility of educators to curb violence and intimidation by school bullies.

"The aggressive kind of behavior we're seeing in our schools is particularly significant, but I don't think most parents have any understanding of the problem."

"Hopefully, we can come up with some effective ideas to deal with this growing problem," Stephens said.

Ronald Selman, a Harvard psychologist who runs a school for severely troubled children, said sitting bullies down with victims at counseling sessions has proved effective in curbing their aggressive behavior.

HE SAID BULLIES and victims alike lack problem-solving skills, leaving them unable to logically analyze the reasons for a conflict and adopt a "fight or flight" attitude depending on whether they are aggressive or passive.

Selman disputed findings by a Norwegian professor, Dan Olweus, that bullies have average or above-average self esteem. Other research has said bullies, like their victims, have low self esteem.

Selman said his clinical work has found that bullies "are insecure but have hardened themselves so it's hard to detect."

Olweus, however, told the forum that his continuing research in Norway found no evidence bullies are insecure.

"Generally (bullies) have a positive attitude toward violence and the use of violent means. They are often characterized by a strong need to dominate others and they show little empathy with victims of bullying," he said.

Several of the participants agreed that whether children develop aggressive tendencies depends largely on their parents. Most bullies have indifferent or negative parents, especially mothers, and both parents use physical punishment, they said.

"That is what I call silent violence of parents, not getting involved," said Olweus.

Nathaniel M. Floyd, school psychologist in Southern Westchester, N.Y., said parents can play a major role in halting what he has termed "peer terrorism."

RONALD G. SLABY, a Harvard education professor, praised a successful program Olweus developed that has reduced victim-bully problems in Norway's schools. But he said any program drafted by U.S. educators would have to take into account the widespread violence on American television.

The Norwegian government called for Olweus' study, the most extensive to date on bullies and their victims, after determining that bullying was a factor in three youth suicides, he said.

Olweus said a program against bullying should begin in elementary schools because older students are more difficult to rehabilitate. Sixty percent of the school bullies tracked during the Norway study had at least one criminal conviction by the age of 23 and 40 percent had three convictions by that age, compared to Norway's average of 10 percent, he said.

The News

Southbridge, Mass. Wednesday, May 13, 1987 $1.50 A WEEK DELIVERED BY CARRIER 30 cents

Experts: School bullies need a feminine touch in upbringing

By Deirdre Wilson
UPI Staff Writer

CAMBRIDGE (UPI) — Schoolyard bullies — the bigger, tougher kids that terrorize and beat up their peers — need to be raised more like girls, a group of researchers studying the problem says.

The researchers, who began a two-day conference on the subject at Harvard University, agreed Tuesday that the most aggressive children are raised in a masculine environment and undergo more physical discipline.

The 13 child behavior experts also said the problem of school bullies extends from large cities to small towns and has been ignored too long.

Dr. Leonard Eron, a University of Illinois researcher, said one of every four aggressive children commits felonies as an adult, including assault, rape and murder.

"We must re-examine what it means to be a man or masculine in our society," Eron said. "We should socialize boys more in the manner that we socialize girls."

'We must re-examine what it means to be a man or masculine in our society. We should socialize boys more in the manner that we socialize girls.'

The meeting of the 13 experts was organized by the National School Safety Center, a partnership of the U.S. Justice and Education departments.

The California-based center was created in 1984 with the goal of ridding schools of crime, violence and drugs and improving student discipline, attendance and achievement.

Stewart Greenbaum, the center's communications director, said he organized the meeting after noticing more frequent news accounts of research on school bullying, victims of bullies suing schools and depressed youths committing suicide.

Greenbaum said he hopes the meeting will result in new school and parent guides on how to prevent bullying and a media campaign to make the public more aware of the problem of school violence.

"There's a lot of denial because schools don't want to admit there's a problem," he said.

Eron said school bullying has not worsened — it just hasn't been dealt with.

After researching the behavior of 870 Columbia County, N.Y., schoolchildren over 22 years, he determined boys are generally more aggressive than girls and engage in more violent behavior.

Similarly, girls who like boys' sports and toys are also more agressive, he said.

The key to prevent bullying lies in the way children are raised, Eron said. Those who grow up in a masculine environment are more likely to become bullies, he said.

"Boys receive more physical stimulation from their mothers while girls receive more verbal," Eron said. "In nursery school ... girls are softly reprimanded. Boys are scolded loudly. Teachers are not even aware that they are responding differently to boys and girls."

But while the researchers agreed children need to be taught sensitivity rather than aggression, they acknowledged that message may be difficult to convey to the public.

"A number of parents — fathers in particular — would be outraged if you told them to make their boys into girls," said Stanford, Calif., psychologist Dan Olweus.

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NUMBER 46
THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 1987
NEW BUFFALO, MICHIGAN

New Buffalo TIMES

Schoolyard bullying contributes to unhealthy adulthood

STUART GREENBAUM

Authorities on schoolyard bullies and victims gathered from around the world at Harvard Univeristy recently to develop a five-point national prevention program on this pervasive problem. Research shows that one in seven students are either bullies or victims of bullies, and that one in 10 students will be victimized by bullies.

The experts convened at the Schoolyard Bully Practicum, May 12-13 at Harvard in Cambridge, Massachussetts, sponsored by the National School Safety Center. NSSC is a school crime prevention and resource center headquartered in Encino, California and funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Practicum participants agreed upon five key issues that must be acknowledged by the public in trying to solve the bullying-victimization phenomenon. They are: 1) that schoolyard bullying is a significant problem; 2) that fear and emotional and physical suffering is becoming a way of life for bullying victims; 3) that young bullies are more likely to grow up and become criminals and suffer from family and professional problems; 4) that the prevailing attitude that kids fighting each other are just experiencing normal youthful aggressive behavior must be discarded; and 5) that the United States should follow the lead of Japan and Scandinavia whose governments have addressed their bullying problems with national intervention and prevention programs.

The bully-victim issue has gained prominence in recent months partly because merciless bullying has caused several victims to take their own lives. One of these suicide victims, 12-year-old Nathan Faris, a 7th-grade student in DeKalb, Missouri, fatally shot another student before turning the gun on himself in class last March.

Lawsuits have also been filed against school district and administrators by bullying victims who claim they were denied the right to attend safe, secure and peaceful campuses. (The Right to Safe Schools amendment of the California Constitution is the basis for several of these suits.)

The Practicum was the first such meeting of prominent researchers, psychologists, and school, law enforcement and public relations practitioners. The intent of the program was to have these national and international authorities on adolescent agression and schoolyard bullying propose ways to apply their research and model programs toward a comprehensive national awareness campaign.

NSSC will introduce various components of the experts' program suggestions during the next six months. According to Practicum participants, five central ideas must be communicated to educators, students and the community:

1) Schoolyard bullying is a significant problem. Based on research conducted by Practicum chair Dan Olweus, Ph.D., head of personality psychology at Bergen University in Norway, 15 percent of school children are or will be involved in bully-victim problems. One in 10 students will be harassed or attacked by bullies. These figures are based on surveys of 140,000 Norwegian junior and senior high school students, and according to Olweus, now a visiting professor at Stanford University's Center for the Advanced Study of the Behavioral Sciences, are most likely representative of United States figures as well.

2) Fear is becoming a way of life for bullying victims. Children routinely avoid areas on campuses where bullies hang out — certain bathrooms or other places on the school grounds are considered "unsafe turf." More serious are those students who drop out of school because they fear for their safety. Other students no longer capable of dealing emotionally with being bullied runaway or even commit suicide. Although extreme, recent newspaper stories from around the country and Japan document this sad commentary.

3) Schoolyard bullies are more likely to grow up and have problems with the law as well as suffer professionally and socially. These research findings demonstrate that "kids learn a certain way of behaving and solving problems," said Leonard Eron, Ph.D., a research professor at the University of Illinois-Chicago. "It sticks with them. They don't lose that kind of aggressive behavior as they become adults." Eron and other Practicum participants believe that early prevention of intervention can not only stop schoolyard bullying, but save

There's more to schoolyard bullying than meets the eye.

society and the bully from years of potentially tragic problems.

4) The prevailing attitude that fighting is just "kids being kids" or that it is some sort of youthful "rite of passage" must be discarded. Just as adults would not accept abuse either physically or verbally, neither should schoolyard bully-victim problems be treated lightly. "There appears to be a pervasive ethic of agressive behavior that seriously detracts from the school curriculum," said Nathanial Floyd, Ph.D., a practicing psychologist and counselor for the Board of Cooperative Educational Services in Southern Westchester County, New York.

5) In Scandinavia and Japan, bullying, referred to as mobbing or ijime, respectively, has caught the attention and resources of their national governments. Intervention and prevention strategies, supported by national public information campaigns, have been successful in reducing bullying incidents in these countries and can work in the United States as well.

Practicum participants identified a wide range of strategies to help educators and other control or prevent bullying. First, assess the scope of the problem through a questionnaire answered by teachers and students; communicate clear and consistently enforce behavior standards; closely monitor playground activity and be visible on campus; and watch for symptoms of bullying victims such as withdrawal, decline in study habits or grades, anxiety, and cuts, bruises or torn clothing. The key, though, is for everyone—educators, law enforcers, parents and students—to better understand schoolyard bully-victim problems and work together to prevent this emotional and physical among our youth.

Ronald Stephens, Ed.D., NSSC's executive director, stated "Successful handling of a school buly can change the behavior of the bully and have a direct positive affect on the entire campus climate and ultimately society.

"Teaching children improved social skills such as conflict resolution, negotiation, legal rights and responsibilities and simple courtesy will go a long way towards reversing the tragic consequences of the bully-victim problem," said Stephens.

Practicum participants, along with Drs. Olweus, Eron and Floyd, included Gerald Lesser, Ph.D., professor of Education and Psychology, Robert Selman, Ph.D., associate professor of Education, and Ronald Slaby, Ph.D., psychologist, Graduate School of Education, all from Harvard University; David Perry, Ph.D., professor of psychology, Florida Atlantic University; Peter Blauvelt, director of Security, Prince George County Public Schools, Upper Marlboro, Maryland; Robert Maher, assistant principal, Lakeland Senior High School, Shrub Oak, New York; NSSC's Stephens and Field Services Director Glen Scrimger; and from Cambridge, Massachussetts, public relations counselor Edward L. Bernay, Hon. Ph.D. Considered the "father of modern public relations," Bernays reflected on his seven decades of professional experience counseling public interest institutions and causes to direct the Schoolyard Bully Practicum session on "engineering consent" of the public for this endeavor.

METRO

Why Bullies Do It: 'To Really Have Fun'

School Violence Being Studied

By Dana Priest
Washington Post Staff Writer

Deshea Johnson, a senior at Wakefield High School in Arlington, is a self-described bully. So are Eric Bea and Donald M. Lambert Jr., both members of the wrestling team, who together weigh about 465 pounds.

Each day, the three youths and others like them everywhere uphold a time-tested tradition that only recently has received the attention of national experts.

"Pick on people? We do that all the time," said Johnson, speaking only for himself. "We pick on the little guys, because we think they're weaker than we are . . . . We don't leave them alone, we pick on them constantly."

"Why do I do it?" he asked himself. "To have fun. To really have fun."

"Bullyism," as the practice was dubbed last week at a two-day seminar at Harvard University, is nothing new. What is new is that someone has decided to study it.

Last week the California-based National School Safety Center, which received $1.4 million from the Justice Department this year to study and educate the educators on school-related violence, brought together 13 national experts in the field.

The group presented papers and statistics, discussed models for analyzing the behavior and ways to help schools stop it.

Like any subject, once it becomes a recognized phenomenon it gets its own set of statistics. In this case, the attendees at the symposium learned that one out of seven students is a bully or a victim.

See BULLIES, B7, Col. 3

BY MANUELLO PAGANELLI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Wakefield friends, from left, Wilbur Salas, Eric Bea and Donald Lambert.

BY MANUELLO PACANELLI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Wakefield senior Christina Morris, pictured with pal Robert Mullins, says she outsmarts bullies by being nice to them.

Why Bullies Do It: 'To Really Have Fun'

BULLIES, From B1

"It's a kind of barnyard pecking order," said Ronald Stephens, executive director of the center, which spent about $7,500 on the conference, titled "Schoolyard Bully Practicum."

Reputation is what the bullying game is all about, say students, school officials and the experts. While the National School Safety Center estimates that 525,000 "attacks, shakedowns and robberies" occur in an average month in public secondary schools, Arlington officials could cite only minor incidents of this nature.

At Wakefield, for example, a bully intimidated a student into letting him "borrow" a $300 gold necklace. It was never returned. To minimize the possibility of extortion, officials monitoring the school cafeteria at Kenmore Intermediate School immediately question students seen passing money.

School officials and students in Arlington said that a bully's victim is always the kid who, in some way, veers from the standard. This is the one whose pants are too short, who wears outmoded glasses, who is smaller or smarter than most, the one without many friends.

"It's all right to have Cs, but it's not all right to have As and it's not cool to have Ds," said Maile Brim, a youth resource officer from the Arlington Police Department who is stationed at Wakefield. "It's the kid who pulls away from the norm . . . usually someone who doesn't have what they call back-up."

Nuzhat Rana, a senior at Wakefield, has been harassed by female bullies but does not know why. "They act rude, like they want to fight. They usually say, 'Look at how you eat,' or how you dress or they step on your foot and push you," said Rana. She said she does not know why she is sometimes the target of bullies. "I tell them I don't want to fight."

Bea and Lambert, two buddies on the Wakefield wrestling team, think of the problem a bit differently.

"They don't do it for money," said Lambert, whose style of loud harassment has endeared him to many in his senior class, which voted him the Most Friendly this year. "They do it just to mess around. We don't try to hurt anyone, it's all in fun."

Wilbur Salas, at 16 years old and 115 pounds, the smallest and youngest of a Bea-Lambert-Salas friendship trio, said of Bea, the largest of the three: "He doesn't need to bully them, he's got his reputation."

Stephens, of the National School Safety Center, said the harassing behavior is meant to set an individual, or a clique, apart.

Twice a year, Robin Jones, a youth resource officer at Kenmore, talks to each classroom of students about bullying. He said he watches entire classes try to put themselves above the rest.

"We have a problem with eighth graders bullying the seventh graders," explained Jones, who said he, too, was a bully when he was young.

Christina Morris, a senior at Wakefield, said she has been the target of bullying for a long time. Morris, whose nickname is "Tumblelina," said she has finally beat the bullies at their own game.

Now, rather than yelling back or fighting when taunted by the nickname, she reacts as if it were her real name. "If you cry about it and get upset, they just pick on you more," she said. "If you treat them in a nice way, they just leave you alone and you tend to see the people who are your real friends."

Morris has analyzed the situation as well as any of the experts. She offers this explanation on why some bullies are bullies: "If you don't feel like you can do anything else and you can beat up everyone in the school, at least you can do something."